Mr. President, late last night, we learned the news we have

been longing to hear since the worst morning in our memory: an American

operation brought Osama bin Laden to justice. This was an American

mission ordered by President Obama and accomplished by America's brave

and brilliant military and intelligence professionals.

Last night's news stunned the world. But this operation's success

should surprise no one. America's special forces and intelligence

operatives are the best--the best trained, the best equipped, the best

led.

Every day of every year they risk their lives for our sake, for our

safety. They are the most professional and proficient forces on the

planet. Yesterday, they brought down the most wanted mass murderer on

Earth. Their success is the most significant victory yet in the fight

against al-Qaida and terrorism and sends a strong and unmistakable

message to terrorists who threaten our country, our people, and our

interests.

This success is a direct result of President Obama's leadership and

the national security priorities he outlined when he took office and

the green light he gave our forces this weekend. President Obama

insisted that we refocus on Afghanistan and Pakistan as the central

battlefields in our fight against terrorism.

Those tremendous military, diplomatic, intelligence, and economic

efforts are the reason we woke up this morning in a world that is no

longer home to Osama bin Laden. But the end of his life is not the end

of the fight. Yesterday's operation is indeed a measure of justice, but

it is only one measure of justice. Absolutely it is a definitive

victory, but it does not define absolute victory. America welcomes the

success of our fellow citizens' extraordinary mission.

Even as we breathe a sigh of relief, though, we are not relieved of

our duty to be vigilant, to be persistent and defeat our enemy and to

make our Nation stronger. The leader of al-Qaida is gone, but his

organization is not. We know our enemy is widespread and motivated. The

truth is, it may be more motivated today then it was yesterday.

Our troops continue to fight. Our intelligence professionals continue

to work. Their families continue to sacrifice. We continue to support

all of them and support each other.

We also pause today to, once again, lend a shoulder to those whose

grief

never ends, not with time, not with bin Laden's demise, not ever. This

significant measure of justice is but a small measure of comfort for

those who lost loved ones in America and around the world, in New York

and Virginia and Pennsylvania, aboard the USS Cole, and in American

Embassies in Africa, on trains in London and Madrid, and in so many

other places.

Bin Laden's death does not bring back the thousands of innocent

people his thugs killed or make whole families who will be forever

incomplete. But it is an important milestone that reminds the world

America does not suffer the wicked and will not submit to evil. Our

resolve is strengthened when it is challenged and our unity, though it

too is often tested, is unbreakable.

Because of the hard work of courageous Americans and our military,

intelligence, diplomatic, and law enforcement communities, a long evil

chapter in our Nation's history closed yesterday. Today, we welcome the

spring of a new optimism and renewed patriotism. The chapter now behind

us ended with justice. We hope the chapter ahead of us will bring

security and peace.

While the Nation and the world absorb this crucial development, the

work of the Senate continues. Today, we begin a new month and a new

work period and a new opportunity to come together to create jobs. I

hope this month will be a productive month. There are several important

and time-sensitive items on our plate. One, I hope to wrap up the small

business jobs bill. This has been on the floor for weeks and weeks and

weeks--far too long--and we need to resolve it so we can move on to

other matters.

Two, we will have the same debate in the Senate that the American

people are having at home; that is, the question of whether we should

keep giving away money to oil companies that clearly do not need

taxpayer handouts. That will be part of a larger debate we will

continue having about how best to reduce our reliance on foreign oil

and invest better and smarter in clean energy.

Three, we will vote on the House-passed budget. A majority of the

House has embraced it, a majority of the American people have rejected

it, and the Senate will soon have its say.

Finally, we will confirm judicial nominees, many of whom we have

waited a long time for in the Senate. If the minority forces us to file

cloture on those nominees in order to get a final vote, I will file

cloture. I think it is too bad if we get involved in this with trial

court judges. We cannot waste any more time or play these games for a

longer period of time. The country needs these empty benches filled.

We also have other nominations to confirm, including the Attorney

General's top Deputy, No. 1 Deputy, Jim Cole. The Deputy Attorney

General runs the day-to-day operations of the Department of Justice. He

is also the person who signs the critical warrants to permit our

intelligence officials to conduct surveillance on suspected terrorists.

But he cannot do that unless the Senate confirms him. So we must do

that soon.

Especially given last night's developments, it is unthinkable that

partisanship and legislative ploys would keep a well-qualified nominee

out of this important national security role.

A moment ago we began this remarkable new day in the Senate the same

way we begin every day in session. We begin it with the Pledge of

Allegiance to our flag. Its closing words were the powerful closing

words of President Obama's address to the Nation last night. Their

meaning is even more profound today, the first day of this new era.

The words all'' represent America's

purpose. This weekend, in the name and pursuit of liberty, heroic

Americans halfway around the world secured justice for an evil man's

victims, for the survivors of his terror, for Americans, their allies,

and the entire world.